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AUTHOR	Korn, Thomas A.
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ABSTRACT

The objective of the publication is to provide placement persons with some guidelines for using one occupational information resource, The Dictionary of Occupational Titles (D.O.T.), as a more efficient tool for locating occupations in local industry. The five steps involved in occupation finding using the D.O.T. are described. (Author/BP)

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OCCUPATION FINDING FOR PLACEMENT USING THE DICTIONARY OF OCCUPATIONAL TITLES

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Thomas A. Korn

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RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTER

THE STOUT VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION INSTITUTE

University of Wisconsin-Stout

Menomonie, Wisconsin

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Jason D. Andrew, Ph.D.
Director

Knowledge about occupations and the world of work are essential competencies that all rehabilitation personnel should possess. In recent years the emphasis placed upon developing these competencies among employed rehabilitation workers has increased considerably. However, most of the recently developed training programs and materials which describe the uses of occupational information in the rehabilitation process have been oriented to vocational evaluators, rehabilitation counselors, or adjustment persons. Little significance has been attached to providing placement persons with more efficient techniques, particularly in the area of occupation finding. The objective of this brief article is to provide placement persons with some guidelines for using one occupational information resource as a more efficient tool for locating occupations in local industry.

The Dictionary of Occupational Titles (Department of Labor, 1965; D.O.T.) is the most comprehensive occupational information resource presently available. The D.O.T. systematically describes worker characteristics and occupational requirements for 35,550 different job titles. It categorizes and codes this information so that it is interrelated and more flexible for the consumer. The usefulness of the D.O.T. in the rehabilitation process is well documented (Nadolsky, 1966; Colvin, 1973; Phillips, 1973), and its actual employment by practitioners seems to be increasing. One aspect of D.O.T. use that is not generally known, however, is the application of "industrial classification information" to solving the common placement problem of locating jobs in local industries.

All job titles in the D.O.T. have one or more industry designations assigned to them. These designations indicate the type of economic activity that a job title is usually associated with. All industry designations in the D.O.T. are based upon one of the following criteria (Department of Labor, 1965):

1. Character of services rendered--as in amusement and recreation services.
2. Products manufactured--as in the rubber tire and tube industry.

3. Primary process involved--as in non-ferrous metal and refining industry.
4. Raw materials used--as in stonework industry.
5. Generic name of work activities--when these activities are general enough so that they are common to many industries or not particular to a specific industry as in clerical work or machine shop.
6. Any industry jobs--occupations that occur in more industries than can be conveniently listed in the job definition found in Volume I of the D.O.T. but which don't fall within a type of work description. These occupations are given the designation "ANY IND.", meaning the occupation can be found in any industry. Examples of job titles which have the "ANY INDS." classification appear on pages 537-544 of Volume II.

Specific definitions for each of the 229 industry designations used in the D.O.T. are found in alphabetical order in Volume II (Occupational Classifications) of the D.O.T. on pages 531 to 635.

In any local economy within the United States, a number of diverse industries and occupations can be found. Generally, all communities have a number of occupations that fall within categories five and six of the D.O.T.'s industrial classification scheme. Usually these kinds of occupations are widely known to rehabilitation workers. However, community occupations that exist in industrial classification categories one to four are wholly dependent upon the industrial base of the community and are not well known to rehabilitation workers unless they have had some previous vocational experience within the industry. It is the identification of these unknown occupations in local industry that is frequently of major concern to placement persons as well as other rehabilitation workers. Using the D.O.T., placement persons can easily locate job titles in specific local industries by following several simple steps.

The steps involved in occupation finding using the D.O.T. are as follows:

Step 1: Write a broad description of the activities that are typically done in the local industry and, if possible, record a few job titles.

For example:

"Armaments Corporation primarily manufactures naval aircraft weapons, tank guns, coast and field artillery as well as barrels, breeches, and other component parts for them. Other products manufactured include mounts, carriages, and turrets for these devices."

Examples of some job titles reported for the industry are:

"artillery maintenance foremen"

"proof technician"

"gun number marker"

Step 2: Make a list of key words that seem representative of the activity description. These key words should be generally consistent with the six criteria used by the Department of Labor for developing industry designation. Key words for the previous example might be:

"heavy weapons manufacturing"

"ordnance industry"

"firearms and guns industry"

Step 3: Turn to the "Industry Index", pages 637-639 in Volume II of the D.O.T. Attempt to locate an industry designation that best matches up with the key words you have developed in Step 2. Check the accuracy of the match between your key word and the best match industry designation by referring to the definition of the industrial designation you have chosen. The page number for the definition of industrial designation is listed immediatley after the industry designation in the Industry Index. If the definition for

the industry designation you have chosen matches with the written description developed in Step 1, your're in business. If not, review your key word list in terms of all six industry designation criteria, being particularly cognizant of numbers five and six.

In the case of our example, there are no matching industry designations for "heavy weapons industry" or "ordnance industry" in the Industry Index. However, the description for "firearms and guns industry" (page 638) appears to match. By referring to industry designation definitions for "firearms and guns industry" on page 570 of the "Industry Arrangement of Titles" in Volume II, it is apparent that the activity description from Step 1 matches quite closely with the definition for "firearms and guns industry".

After you have located the appropriate industry definition for your local industry, leave Volume II open to the page with the definition. You'll need this page for the next step.

Step 4: Review the job titles listed beneath the best match industry definition, noting whether any of the job titles you had from Step 1 are similar to those listed. If there are job titles listed below the industry definition that are very similar to the occupations on the job titles list you developed in Step 1, locate these similar job titles in Volume I (Definition of Titles) of the D.O.T. If the job definitions from Volume I are comparable to the type of activities listed in the activity description from Step 1, you can be reasonably safe in assuming that many of the occupations listed under the industry designation will be found in your local industry. Record the D.O.T. code--the six-digit number following

the job title in Volume I-- for each of the occupations on your occupations list.

If you are unable to develop a list of possible job titles that could exist in the local industry or if none of your listed occupations match job titles found under the industrial definition, select several widely-spaced job titles from the list and look up their definitions in Volume I. The definition found on these slected occupations should match the content of your activity description developed in Step 1. If the definitions and the activity description match, record the D.O.T. codes for these jobs. If none of the jobs listed below the job definition match your activity description, you may have made an error at Step 2. In that case, go back to Step 2 and start over.

The listing of job titles below each of the industry definitions in the "Industry Arrangement of Titles", Volume II - pages 531-635, indicates all of the job titles usually found in a particular industry.

Step 5: Go to the 1966 supplement (Selected Characteristics of Occupations--Physical Demands, Working Conditions, Training Time-- 1966) to the D.O.T. and locate the D.O.T. codes for the occupations you have listed. D.O.T. codes in the 1966 supplement are arranged in numerical order according to the first three digits (Occupational Group Arrangement) of every job's D.O.T. code. As a result, D.O.T. code 001.081 appears on the first page of the occupational listings in the supplement and code 979.887 on the last page. In order to locate a specific job code in this supplement--for example, resin kettleman - 550.782--simply page through the supplement until you find the listing of job codes starting with the number 5. Then go either up or down

the list until the appropriate code (550.782, page 100) and job title (resin kettleman) are found. This listing of jobs with identical Occupational Group Arrangement (first three digits of the D.O.T. code) and industry designation form the career ladder for any occupation within a particular industry. For our example (550.782), the career ladder for 550. occupations in the glue industry includes the following jobs:

550.137	Shipping Foreman	(page 100)
550.782	Resin Kettle Operator	(page 100)
550.885	Glue Blender	(page 101)
	Roll-Tender Helper	

This career ladder indicates the top occupation (550.137) for this occupation, an intermediate occupation (550.782), and several entry-level occupations (550.885). This indicates that if a worker remained in the 550. occupational areas long enough and was a satisfactory employee, he could expect to advance from a 550.885 job to a 550.782 or 550.137 occupation. Career ladder information, with its placement implications, can be expanded considerably by referring to Worker Trait Groups in Volume II of the D.O.T. All occupations in the D.O.T. fall into one of the 114 Worker Trait Groups into which all 35,550 job titles are classified. The Worker Trait Group code number for any job title is the last three digits of the D.O.T. code assigned to any occupation. For our example of resin kettle operator (550.782), the Worker Trait Group is .782. The Volume II page number for this Worker Trait Group can be determined by reading the column immediately following the D.O.T. code in the 1966 supplement. The Volume II page

number for resin kettle operator, Worker Trait Group, .782, is 435.

Worker Trait Groups provide placement information on worker and occupational characteristics as well as the manner in which clients obtain jobs. Discussion of worker and job characteristics is beyond the scope of this short article. However, information about how workers obtain jobs and move within career ladders does relate to occupation finding. An explanation of the typical method of occupational entry is provided in the 'Training and Method of Entry' section of the Worker Trait Group. By reading over this information, it is apparent that the usual job entry method for resin kettle operator (550.782) is through apprenticeship and that employers prefer applicants who have had prior work experience as machine tenders or machine tender helpers and who are willing to accept responsibility. This information can be augmented somewhat by referring back to the last column for the relevant page (page 100) in the 1966 supplement. The information presented here indicates specific training time requirements for the occupation in question. The data is coded, however, and must be interpreted using the appendices found on pages A-5 and A-6 of the supplement. Upon completion of the fifth step in this occupation finding model, the occupations in local industry have been identified; their career ladders described; and the method of entry for these occupations specified. Based upon this information, the placement person should be able to identify positions within the local economy where rehabilitation clients may be placed.

The five steps which were described provide a relatively simple and straightforward technique for occupation finding in unfamiliar

industries. All that is needed to use the technique is a description of the activities which the industry or business engages in, some idea about the names of some occupations that are done there, and a D.O.T. The information resulting from using this D.O.T.-based technique provides not only the titles of occupations found in a particular industry, but also can be used to generate additional placement information such as worker characteristics and occupational requirements. Individuals not familiar with the use of this additional occupational information should obtain a copy of A Keyed Information Index to the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, 3rd. ed., 1965, Volumes I and II and Supplement 1, 1966 and Supplement 2, 1968 (Korn, 1974). This publication describes the use and location of various types of information about occupations found in the D.O.T. Additionally, the five steps described can be used by other rehabilitation personnel in the development of work samples or occupational information for direct client use.

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